



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2007

No. 18

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHERROD BROWN, a Senator from the State of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by the Chief of Staff to the Senate Chaplain, Alan N. Keiran.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

PRAYER

Let us pray.

Spirit of the living God, discover us today. Remove the obstacles that keep us from You and reach into the barren places of our hearts. Permit us to hear Your whisper as we are guided by our conscience. Chasten us as You guide our feet to the right path.

Today, O Lord, speak to our Senators. Let some ennobling word of justice and beauty inspire them in this challenging hour. Strengthen them to mend broken relationships, to maintain their integrity, and to strive always to please You. Protect them with Your power. We pray this in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHERROD BROWN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable SHERROD BROWN, a Senator from the State of Ohio, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BROWN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. This morning, the Senate will be in a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, the first half controlled by the majority and the remaining half controlled by the Republicans. Following morning business, we will resume H.R. 2, the minimum wage bill, and debate on the motion to invoke cloture on the substitute amendment to H.R. 2 will extend until 12:15 p.m. today, and that time is equally divided. However, at 11:55 a.m., the Republican leader will be recognized for 10 minutes for whatever time he or his designee wishes to speak, and then the final 10 minutes prior to 12:15 p.m. will be controlled by the majority. The first 5 minutes of that time will be for Senator KENNEDY and the second 5 minutes will be for me.

Regardless of the outcome of the cloture vote, the Senate will recess for the party conferences and then reconvene at 2:15 p.m. For the information of the Senate, each Senator will have until 11 a.m. to file any additional second-degree amendments.

I will have more to say later today regarding the schedule, according to how the votes turn out.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 60 minutes, with each Senator permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority and the second half of the time under the control of the minority.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at long last, I believe we are on the verge of passing legislation that is long overdue. Soon we are going to vote on a procedural motion, known as a cloture motion, for the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which takes us one step closer to raising the minimum wage to \$7.25 per hour over the next 2 years.

It has been 10 years since Congress has raised the minimum wage for the lowest paid workers in America. Since we last raised the minimum wage, its value has eroded because of inflation, the rising cost of living. Unlike our congressional pay raises, it has not kept pace with the actual cost of living in America.

The Democrats have been trying for almost 10 years to convince the majority party, then Republicans, that there

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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